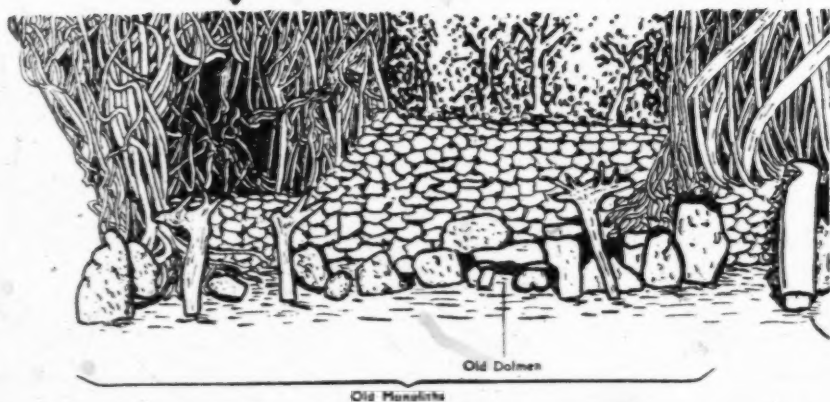


Original stone-platform on which cannibal feasts were held. The roots of the banyan tree surrounding it are hollowed out to form a cave, in which the victim was cooked and eaten. Probably built at or before the time of Na-va-gharu-kalat (see pp. 414, 621) 65



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← Plate II, Fig. 1 →

← Plates II

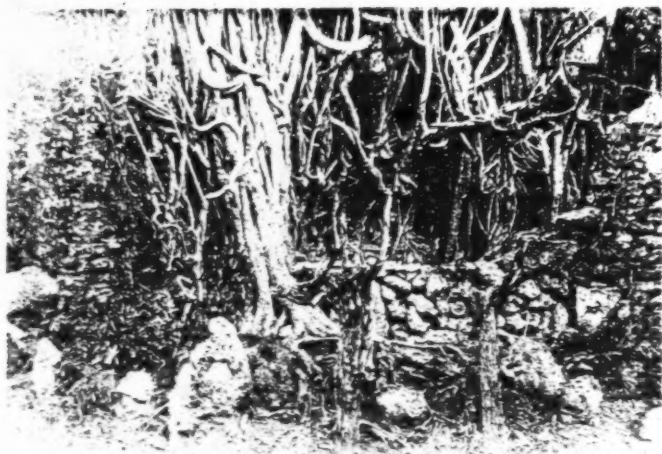
Approximate Scale

0 5 10 20 30 40 50 Feet

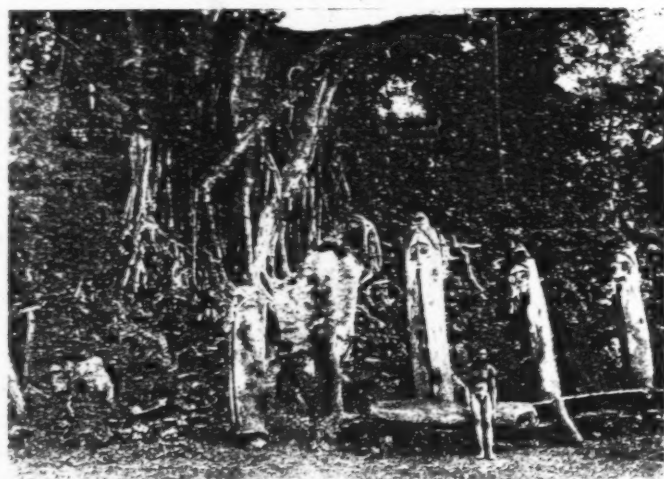
[Frontispiece (A)]

PLATE II. 1 and 2

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1. Original stone-platform at Pete-hul, on which cannibal feasts were held in a "cave" hollowed out from the aerial roots of the overhanging banyan tree. (See Frontispiece)
2. Gong-orchestra at Pete-hul, with Ma-taru leaning against an old prostrate gong used as a seat when playing the mother-gong

[facing p. 35]

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ancestral ghosts around whose cult the ritual which takes place in the dancing-ground centres.

Turning our backs now on the Lower Side, let us, with the aid of the panoramic view seen in the Frontispiece and Plates II and III, survey the high place where the chief sacrifices take place. From end to end the ground is about 300 feet long. Along the whole of the Upper Side, built on the slight elevation which forms one side of the valley, is a continuous platform of coral blocks carefully fitted together, rising to a height of 10 to 12 feet from the ground. This, though in appearance a continuous structure, is in fact a succession of contiguous stone-platforms on which the most important tusked boars are sacrificed.¹ On the extreme left is the enormous banyan tree already mentioned, some of the aerial roots of which have been carved away so as to form a kind of cave within the tree, where, on a part of the stone-platform rather lower than the rest, cannibal feasts were formerly held.

To the right of this in front of the stone-platform is a small dolmen and other upright stones, and to the right of these again stands proudly the orchestra of upright slit gongs, huge trunks of forest trees transported from the mainland, hollowed out through a longitudinal slit so as to leave only a thin shell of the original trunk. Above the slit is carved an image representing the face of the ancestral ghost, whose voice speaks when the gong is sounded by hitting one side of the slit with a soft-wood stick. The nose of the image is pierced, and from it hang the jaws of the tusked pigs sacrificed in its honour on the day of consecration. The tallest of these gongs is about 12 feet high, not counting the base buried in the ground. Since no sacred object is ever removed, but simply allowed to rot where it stood, the remains of old gongs are also seen, two leaning to the right; one lying in front, now used as a seat for casual use. Four different sizes of gongs go to make up an orchestra, and the complicated and indescribably stirring rhythms they beat out are the wonder of all who have the good fortune to hear them.²

Beyond the gongs, supported on three stakes, is a rack displaying the jaws of tusked pigs recently sacrificed in one of the innumerable performances that go to make up the protracted Maki rite. To the right of this is another small dolmen, and beyond this again is a cylindrical cane structure set up to protect a special yam and banana tree planted during the mortuary rites for an old man.³

To the right of these again are three large dolmens. These, as will be described later,⁴ were erected at successive performances of the Maki rite (as in the case of gongs, no sacred stone object is ever removed), and are the stone altars at which other important tusked pigs are sacrificed.

¹ For details of the sacrifices performed here and at the other stones see pp. 413 ff., 430.

² For details see pp. 311 ff.

³ See p. 330.

⁴ See p. 414.

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number of dead on both sides is equal. Thus, if, in revenge for a man murdered for adultery or whatever his offence may have been, the injured party succeed in killing one man of the murderer's clan (whether the murderer himself is a matter of no import), then honour is satisfied, and a peace may be concluded till some fresh fatal act sets the ball rolling again. This process of equalising out by revenging one death by another is called *simbaten*. Thus, if A has killed B, then the clansmen of B will attempt to avenge him by killing a clansman of A, and, if successful, the avenger will call out as he kills him "*Simbaten A*," meaning "Equivalent for the death of A."¹ The word appears to be related to *simbean*, meaning "anniversary,"² both words including the concept of repetition.

If, however, in the affray the injured party kill two men of the other side, so that one party now has one dead and the other two, there can be no peace till the winning party has lost another man. This is the case whatever party may be the victor, whether that of the originally murdered man or his avengers. Subsequent affrays may equal out the number of dead, in which case peace may be restored. On the other hand, they may only increase the discrepancy between the number killed on either side, and thus lead inevitably to further conflict. This leads to several interesting results. In the first place, it is only the most injured party that has any desire to continue the war, wars of conquest being, as I have said, and as is clear from the above, out of the question. A second result is even more curious from our point of view. For, as will be seen, it is thus not the vanquished but the victors that henceforth go in terror of their lives. Moreover, among other warlike activities is the ravaging of the enemy's gardens, and it will be remembered that the Small Islanders are particularly vulnerable in this respect since their gardens are all on the mainland and therefore completely unprotected at night, unless their owners care to spend the night in the bush far from their island homes. Thus a prolonged war injures the victors, if they are Small Islanders, even more than the vanquished. The price paid for victory, both in empty stomachs and in taut nerves, is therefore sometimes so high that it is not the vanquished but the victors who must sue for peace. But the rule demanding an equal number of dead on both sides robs them of all power of obtaining it by any means known to more highly civilised communities. The only solution, therefore, is that they should themselves offer one of their number as victim to restore the balance demanded by the honour of both parties. So they seek out the least desirable member of their own clan, approach him from behind, seize him, truss him up like a pig, decorate him for sacrifice, and send him to the enemy, those who deliver him bearing a cycas leaf, emblem of peace. As a rule, the victim is sent, if possible, alive, and it is said that the enemy thus appeased force him to dig a pit for the fire in which he is to be roasted, and then sacrifice him

¹ See p. 611.

² See p. 557.

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728 with all the ritual due to an enemy captured in battle,¹ and then eat him.
 266 Sometimes, however, he may be killed first, as shown by the following
 account dealing with the close of one of the early wars between the
 villages of Pete-hul and Togh-vanu following Na-va-gharu-kalat's
 challenge at the foundation of Pete-hul.

Human victim sent as peace-offering from Pete-hul to Togh-vanu.

728 This war was caused in the first place by a couple of Pete-hul men
 attempting to seduce the wife of a Togh-vanu man named Miren-mal
 while she was grating coconuts in her garden on the mainland. When
 he challenged them, they shot him, and this was the occasion of a long-
 drawn-out war between the two villages. Many were killed on both sides
 till they were weary of fighting. At last the Pete-hul men made up their
 minds to send a peace-offering in order to end the war. So they decided
 on a youth named Ewur, and, enticing him to climb a *ni-ra* tree for the
 fruit, they shot at him. But they missed, and the doomed youth sprang
 from the tree and made off into the bush. He had, of course, no chance,
 and was eventually shot down and sent as a peace-offering to Togh-vanu,
 where his dead body was duly "sacrificed" according to custom. The
 manner of such "sacrifice" will be described later in the section on
 cannibalism.² The process may not seem very pretty from our point of
 view, but it at least prevents further bloodshed and kills off the weakest
 instead of the strongest.³

Small number of dead in old-time warfare.

726 With regard to the number of men killed in battle, it must not be
 forgotten that all this fighting goes on, as a rule, in thick bush or on the

¹ See p. 414.

² See pp. 622-4.

³ Speiser (3, p. 238, quoting from *Quarterly Jottings from the New Hebrides*, 1909) records a peacemaking scene after a war lasting several years between the Small Islands of Wala and Rano. The Wala men were still a death ahead of the Rano people, who would only consent to peace on the condition of having a Wala man handed over to them to be killed and eaten. When the missionaries (with the authority of a man-o'-war behind them) intervened, their next proposal was that, as they might not have him dead, they would accept a Wala lad "not to kill, but to become a Rano man." The Wala men, however, refused this, and, after much bargaining, agreed instead to hand over a circle-tusker and ten smaller pigs of specified grades. The Rano men grudgingly accepted this, and came over to Wala, but would not land till one extra fat pig was added to the number. Then a Wala man made a speech "lauding the Rano men and saying how much they were esteemed by Wala. He also spoke at length of the splendid present of exceedingly valuable pigs that they were going to hand over to their friends of Rano, and so on. A Rano man replied rather shortly. Privately they had grumbled about the pigs. They were not up to the promises made; but they agreed to take them. . . . Next morning canoes went over from island to island—the first time for some years—and gradually the old friendly relations were resumed."

Somerville (quoted by Wedgwood, 1) records from the Small Island of Uripiv a case of the opposite nature, in which the vanquished sent a small boy as peace-offering to the victors. I know of no other such case, however, in the Small Islands, and am inclined to think this is a mistake.

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In the early stages of this conflict the rule of *lex talionis* seems to have been carried out fairly successfully, and the numbers of dead on either side accord well with those killed in the traditional fighting of the "classical" period. Moreover, the only weapon mentioned in this fighting is the spear with which one of the Tolamp women was killed. It would therefore appear that this part of the fighting was fought without muskets. The ten Atchin men killed in the final battle were, however, out of all proportion to the number of those usually killed in the old days, and the unwonted slaughter was probably due to the possession of muskets by the Vao men before these weapons had reached Atchin.

It is, however, clear from my informant's comment on this account that the Atchin men soon found means of revenging themselves, for he states that in the fighting that followed the inhabitants of the mainland village of Tolamp were almost wiped out. As we have seen, the survivors later migrated to Vao, where they were given land to live on by their Togh-vanu kinsmen, in return for which the Togh-vanu people were given a large share of garden ground on the mainland formerly belonging to Tolamp.

CANNIBALISM AND HUMAN SACRIFICE

Cannibalism general, with few exceptions, throughout the whole group.

When the white man first came to the New Hebrides, cannibalism was practised almost all over the group, though there were certain exceptions. Thus, Codrington reports that there was no evidence for it in Maewo,¹ and that it was quite definitely not practised in the Banks and Torres Islands, though tales of Vampyres in those islands seem to indicate that it was once the custom there too.² A somewhat similar condition of affairs is reported by Tattevin from the district of Pornowol in South Raga, where cannibalism is not practised but man-killers assume the title *ias* in memory of certain mythical beings of this name who ate men.³ Another curious pocket of natives who are not cannibals though all the surrounding natives are is reported by Harrison from Matanavat on the north coast of Malekula.⁴ These are, however, exceptions, and as a general rule cannibalism existed throughout the group.

It was, however, the first thing to be suppressed by what Government there was, with the result that the custom is confined now to East, Central and South-West Santo, the interior of Malekula, East Ambrim and South Raga.⁵

¹ Codrington, 3, p. 344.

² Tattevin, 1, 1926, p. 409. See also p. 17 in this volume.

³ Harrison, 2, p. 40.

⁴ Speiser, 3, pp. 239, 449. Tattevin, however, says that the Pornowol in South Raga are no longer cannibals.

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⁵ Ibid., 3, pp. 221-2.

STONE MEN OF MALEKULA

Recent cannibal feasts in the Small Islands.

266 The last cannibal feast recorded on Vao was in 1892, when it is said that seventeen natives were eaten. This is reported by Speiser from a French publication¹ that I have not had access to, so cannot estimate its value, but the large number reported is so very unusual that I can only suppose it to have been due to one of the raids carried out with muskets.

The last cannibal feast recorded on Wala was in 1906, as the result of peace-making negotiations with a number of mainland villages with whom they had for some time been at war. The mainlanders, having on this occasion apparently been the victors, sent to Wala the hands and heads of as many men as there had been Wala men killed, in order to equalise the number. Speiser reports, however, that at the delivery of these the Wala men slew three of the enemy envoys.² Subsequent equalising is not reported, and it may be taken that this slaughter may have been also part of the above-mentioned musket-induced war of extermination against the bush folk.

Since then, owing to Government and Mission influence, there have been no recorded cannibal feasts on the Small Islands, and if the Small Islanders wish to indulge, this has to be done in secret on the mainland. The natives of Atchin joined in at least one such feast while I was on the island in 1914. The full story will be given in another volume. It is enough here to say that the feast on this occasion consisted of the arm of a woman belonging to one of the mainland villages who had eloped and had been inadvertently killed (for neither the Small Islanders nor the Malekulans kill women if they can help it). The men of Atchin had not taken part in the affray, but it is the custom to send joints off the victim to relatives in other villages, and this arm had been apportioned to them. It was, however, over a day old and rather high when it arrived, so that the participants in the meal, held secretly on the mainland coast opposite Atchin, did not particularly relish it, though all partook. The young men particularly thought it nasty, but the older men attached a spiritual value to it that the younger men no longer do.

Godefroy, writing as late as December 27th, 1925,³ records how, a fortnight before, some Vao men killed a Vao woman on the adjacent mainland (a thing that could never have happened in the old days when women were not killed except by accident), and, contrary to my young Atchin friends, enjoyed the resulting feast, saying, "*Ka mbate vavine kam*

¹ Bourges, p. 129.

² Speiser, 3, pp. 242-3. One body was sent to Atchin, but the men of Atchin were afraid to eat it for fear of vengeance on the part of the mainlanders.

³ In a letter written to his mother, of which his brother, the Rev. A. Godefroy, kindly sent me a copy.

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gani mo ruk se!", "We have cooked a woman and eaten her, and found her very good."¹ 266 ●

Cannibalism an integral part of human sacrifice.

Such meals, held in secret for fear of vengeance by a British or French man-o'-war, represent the last stage in the degradation of what was once in the Small Islands, and still is in the interior of Malekula, a very important custom of religious import, in which cannibalism formed an integral part of the larger and more embracing rite of human sacrifice. 266
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We have already seen several examples of victims killed during the course of ordinary warfare brought home and "sacrificed," whereon the sacrificer becomes ritually re-born.² In all such cases the body is then sacramentally eaten in a manner to be described below.³ It is to be noted, however, that in the old type of warfare before the era of wholesale slaughter due to the introduction of European firearms a man was rarely killed in order that he might be eaten, but was only sacrificed and eaten if he happened to be killed. Moreover, in such cases the motives proper to sacrifice were more often than not mixed with emotions of revenge.

Since ritual cannibalism is far from being universal even in the Western Pacific, and since elsewhere the motive of revenge is amply satisfied by the mere act of killing, combined at times with bodily mutilation or exposure to public view, it is clear that we are here faced with a cultural element introduced into warfare from some other source.

There is a clear indication as to what this source was in the statement so often made by the natives in all the Small Islands that the sacrifice of tusked boars in the present-day Maki replaces the former sacrifice of human beings.⁴ I have already referred to the traditional slaying on Atchin, some twenty generations ago, of a cannibal ogre called *Ias* (corresponding to the mythical *ias* in South Raga) by two brothers called *Mal-mal-mari* and *Mal-mal-oba* who were apparently responsible for the introduction of the Maki into that island.⁵ The same point was made in the answer given to Godefroy by a Vao native whom he asked what his ancestors did before the establishment of the Maki. The native replied, "*Nam ven-vene'i re, nam ga-gani re,*", "We used to shoot and eat

¹ With regard to the killing and eating of white men, it may be of interest to quote from a letter written by Mr. Ewan Corlette (a) who has lived on Malekula since 1903. He says:

"In the whole thirty-five years of my residence here, no missionary (white) has been killed by natives, nor is there any record of any such thing before: though a good many whites have been killed, no adult has ever been eaten or captured, within my knowledge: the last white man killed was a French recruiter, in 1917, at Malua Bay, on the West Coast. The last murder—there is a psychological difference between a shooting and a murder—was that of R. J. Bridges and his five children, at Tautu, on the writer's property. The body of one of the children, a boy aged four, was taken to the village and eaten: this is the one and only instance within the writer's memory of any person of white blood being eaten."

² See pp. 608, 611.

³ See p. 622.

⁴ See pp. 14, 253, 736.

⁵ See p. 171.

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382 one another."¹ Amplifying this, he went on: "They fought with bows and arrows, and ate one another! They had no sense, they understood nothing, they were savages . . . *na-man gen-gan* [literally 'birds of prey']. But the Maki made us wise."²

Theoretically, therefore, the Maki is held to have abolished human sacrifice in favour of the sacrifice of tusked boars.³

Human sacrifice at consecration of a ghamal.

Nevertheless, it still remained customary to obtain a human victim for sacrifice, if possible, on the dolmen built in front of the *ghamal* during the consecration rites connected with its erection, and these rites were regarded as a type of Maki.⁴ In the case recorded on p. 451 the victim was bought from the neighbourhood of Unua, on the east coast of Malekula outside the Small Island cultural area, and would therefore be regarded as a foreigner. I do not know whether he had been killed in battle or whether he was an undesirable member of the sellers' own community on whom they decided to "cash in" and so trussed up in the same manner as the human victim sent as a peace-offering described on p. 599. The victim sacrificed at the consecration of the *ghamal* was paid for with pigs, but I did not record the number of these, or their grade value. There is no doubt, however, that the human victim was worth many times the value of the finest tusked boar, as the emotions arising out of the disputed right to perform the sacrifice, which caused the members of the discomfited Lodge to leave Vao altogether and found a new home on the mainland,⁵ clearly show. There is no doubt also that the victim was subsequently cut up and eaten, as is the invariable custom after formal sacrifice of this nature.⁶

¹ Literally "We (repeatedly) shot one another, we ate one another."

² Godefroy, I, 1933, p. 51. In a previous phrase he erroneously attributes the introduction of the Maki to Melteklerang (see p. 283, note 2). He also makes the native say that his ancestors were "like wild beasts," an unfortunate phrase, since there are no wild animals in Malekula larger than the imported rat.

³ It is notable, however, that the Ambat (variously called also Kahat and Hambut) culture-heroes in West and South-West Malekula were not cannibals though the present inhabitants are (Deacon, 3, pp. 227-8).

⁴ For human sacrifice on a dolmen on Malo see Donau, quoted by Speiser, 3, p. 242.

⁵ See p. 452.

⁶ Obtaining a victim for purely ritual reasons by means other than war is reported also from South-West Malekula by Deacon (4, p. 228): "It is said to have been common in days gone by to buy, or obtain in some other way, a human victim for an important Nimaŋgi celebration." Here, however, unless Deacon is mistaken, the sacrificial aspect seems to have given place largely to sensual considerations, since he adds: "apparently this did not form any essential part of the ceremonial, but was regarded merely as a tasty contribution to the feast."

One method of obtaining a victim recorded by Harrison (2, pp. 38-40) seems to have been the rearing of a bastard solely for sacrifice. The bastard is adopted by a married man who "sees that the child is carefully tended and brought up as his own son, kept healthy and given the best affection," but at the same time keeps him in complete

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It has been pointed out already that the Maki performed for the erection of a *ghamal* was a very special type of Maki, probably of a more archaic type than the Low and High Maki which constitute the normal present-day ritual cycle, and it is probably for this reason that the only actual case of human sacrifice that I have recorded as forming part of Maki ritual was connected with this older type of the rite. I have no record of any such human sacrifice either at High or Low Maki.

Cannibal oven on stone-platform at Pete-hul.

At the same time, however, there still exists, as we have seen, the cave hollowed out among the roots of a banyan tree on the Upper Side of Pete-hul dancing-ground and illustrated in Plate II, in which there was a special stone oven reserved for cannibal feasts. Godefroy says, "In the old days, it received the cut-up limbs of the enemies of the Pete-hul clan who had been killed in war, and these enemies were Vao men belonging to other clans."¹

The victims were, of course, not confined to the members of other

ignorance of the fate in store for him. The sacrificial rite is said to take place when the boy is about thirteen. A special shrine is built over what appears to be a stone-platform with the usual ancestor-image in front/supporting the carved image of a hawk. On the morning of the fatal day the wife of the adopted father who is about to sacrifice him decorates the victim with flowers, bright feathers of scarlet parrot and green fruit-dove. His body is then rubbed down with coconut oil, and his face is painted (though it is not stated what colour). His body also is decorated with leaves, and, though he has not been incised, he is given a new penis-wrapper. Then, as though he were the chief personage in the rite, he leads in by its rope a three-circle-tusker, painted as he is, while behind dance his fellow-villagers. Inside the shrine is a "stone-altar" (i.e. dolmen). It is not stated in what relation this stands to the stone-platform, but from the description it would appear to be in front, as on Vao. The adopted father sits on this dolmen, waiting as the procession headed by the victim dances towards him. Suddenly, those dancing behind the boy seize him, and slipping over his blue-painted neck a rope dangling from the hawk-image, jerk it so that he is left hanging, whereon the sacrificer, lifting his club, sacrifices him by striking him on the head. The victim is then lowered, and the three-circle-tusker he led in is clubbed also and left on the victim's body to die. The body of both victims, the boy and the tusked boar, are then given to the sacrificer's "friend," and the boy's body is given to the makers of the ancestor-image belonging to the neighbouring village of Wowo to eat. The sacrificer assumes the title Mal-tanas. "He communicates with the unearthly. He may do as he wishes; he may even do what is not done. No man dares be hated by him. After the killing he stays for thirty days on the stone-platform. His limbs are covered with armlets of the most valuable shell beads from Malo island; he has pigs' tusks as bangles from elbow to wrist, he eats only yam."

[Apart from the poignant interest of this story, it is significant to note (a) the ritual identity between the human victim and the three-circle-tusker; (b) the title Mal-tanas, which means Lord of the Underworld, corresponding to that of Le-hev-hev the Guardian Ghost assumed by Asaor on Vao (see p. 606); and (c) the ritual seclusion and abstinence observed by the sacrificer on the stone-platform after the rite.]

¹ Godefroy, 1, 1932, p. 231. He adds: "Later, when peace was ultimately established among all the Vao clans, it served for the preparation of feasts more fitting for human beings: pigs, and even heads of young cattle, had the honour of passing through the oven. At last, the rain having washed away its exterior walls, causing great loss of heat, it was filled in, and still is, let us hope, for ever!"

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Vao clans,¹ since, as we have seen, warfare was not confined to Vao, but was waged also against mainland villages and other Small Islands, whose dead were also, if possible, eaten. What connexion, if any, the cooking and eating of enemies had with the present-day Maki I am unfortunately unable to say. It is, however, to be noted that the cave and oven are situated on a pile of stones forming the earliest stone-platform of the long wall-like series of such monuments that have been built for successive performances of the Maki rite in this village. Taken in conjunction with the fact that on Atchin a human victim taken in war was always slaughtered on the stone-platform, there seems at least strong presumptive evidence that in some earlier form of the rite human sacrifice played an important part.

Human sacrifice on dolmen confers higher favours than the sacrifice of tusked boars. "Re-sacrifice" by men of high rank.

There is in any case no doubt in the native mind that human sacrifice conferred favours of the same order as, but still superior to, the sacrifice of tusked boars at the Maki. For, in warfare, every effort was made not to kill an enemy outright, but, having severely injured him so that he could not escape, to transport him home to be ritually sacrificed, on the great dolmen if on Vao, or on the stone-platform if on Atchin. So important was it to keep the victim alive until the moment of sacrifice that, if he showed signs of dying before there was time to bring him home, the victor would swiftly build an improvised dolmen in the bush and ritually sacrifice him on that. Sometimes, however, when a man had been killed, the sacrifice was performed not by the actual killer, but by some older or more important member of the clan on whose behalf the killing had been done. Instances of this have already been given on pp. 606 and 611. It will be remembered also how, in the account of the foundation of Pete-hul, when Na-va-gharu-kalat commanded his clansmen, "If any stranger come ashore, kill him and bring him to me to cut up," it was not the killer, but Na-va-gharu-kalat, who intended to have the honour and glory of performing the sacrifice.²

The sacrificial act. All male members of the community partake of the flesh.

If forced to sacrifice in the bush, the sacrificer had to use any weapon he had at hand with which to deal the sacrificial blow, and moreover had

¹ Those killed in disputes between different portions of the same patrilineal village were neither sacrificed nor eaten. Their immediate kinamen were allowed to take the body and give it due burial. A case in point is that of my informant Ma-taru's father Ter-ter-mal, of Tolamp, killed during a fight between two Tolamp Lodges. His body was recovered and received due burial, and so saved from the fate of being a wandering ghost.

² This recalls the practice in Tanna, where cannibalism was the prerogative of the chiefly class (Humphreys, p. 83).

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to forgo the publicity that accompanies sacrifice on the great dolmen at home. Therefore every effort was made to transport the body home, when the sacrificer ceremonially despatched the victim (whether alive or already dead) with the special kind of wooden hatchet illustrated in Plate XXIV,¹ the only difference being that if the victim was alive the act of sacrifice was called by the sacrificial term *m̄bal*, while in case of re-sacrifice after death it was called simply *tri*, meaning "strike." Indeed, so strong is the natives' recognition of the symbolic nature of such re-sacrifice that there are cases on record of the re-sacrificer simply tapping the dead body with his finger. Whatever method was used, however, the result was that the sacrificer became ritually re-born and signified this fact by taking a new name and title of high rank that would have taken half a lifetime to acquire by the slower, though possibly more "civilised," procedure of the ordinary pig-killing Maki. Special cannibal songs accompanied the rite.² The body was then cut up and placed to cook, if at Pete-hul, in the stone oven underneath the cave hewn out of the aerial banyan roots on the stone-platform on the Upper Side of the dancing-ground. Then followed an all-night dance. The manner of cooking was the same as that for a sacrificial boar, in a great pudding of yams and other vegetables which, when taken out of the oven, was sprinkled with coconut cream. When cooked, every male member of the clan joined in the feast, it being essential that each one, whether he liked the taste of it or not, should partake, if only by placing a small morsel in his mouth.³ Joints, such as arms and legs, were, and still are by the bush folk, sent round as complimentary gifts to other villages in order that they too may partake.⁴ The thigh bones were split open and, after the marrow had been eaten, were preserved for use as knives for cutting up the puddings in which future victims were cooked.⁵

GENERAL REMARKS

It has been seen from the above account that cannibalism constitutes in this part of Malekula the supreme rite of re-birth, transcending in this respect the pig-killing Maki.

¹ Among the inhabitants of the North Malekulan plateau, according to Harrison (2, pp. 403-4), the victim is slung up on a large gong and beaten to death with "sharp-edged hardwood clubs, shaped like canoe paddles." Compare also footnote on p. 621.

² See pp. 610-11.

³ This is also the case in North Raga (see Coombe, quoted by Speiser, 3, p. 243). Speiser (3, p. 241) reports also that on Wala even babes at the breast had a minute portion forced into their mouths.

⁴ According to Speiser (3, p. 241) the dismemberment of the body was due to two further motives: in the first place so that the victim should lose all identity and with it his soul, and in the second place so that the guilt of partaking of his flesh should be equally divided among all.

⁵ See Cambridge Museum, Layard Collection, Nos. 81, 194-6.

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Thus, through the sacrifice of a human being, the sacrificer is re-born in a kind of transcendent way, becoming almost a god, and this benefit extends beyond the individual to the whole community, which, through partaking in the feast, which is a communion rite, and each taking a morsel of the sanctified flesh, also partakes of the re-birth. 266 792

The close resemblance between this rite and that of the Christian Mass could hardly be more clearly expressed than in the following dialogue recorded by Godefroy as having taken place between himself and a young native boy on the eve of Christmas, 1931. The boy approached him with the request that he might be confessed. Godefroy asked: ¹

"So you want to communicate tonight?"

"Yes, Father."

"Oh, but I cannot permit that unless you can explain to me what communion means. Tell me, if you communicate tonight, what is it that you will do?"

"Father, communion means eating the child Jesus."

"That's right, that is exactly it. But how are you going to set about it? Where is the child Jesus?"

"Father, he is up in heaven."

"Have you seen him?"

"No, Father. We can't do that now, but we shall when we die."

"Yes, but you aren't dead yet. How will you be able to eat him tonight?"

"Father, when the priest says the Mass, he takes the host, but that is only bread. But when he has said a prayer over it the bread goes away altogether, and only Jesus is left."

Godefroy goes on: "Charmed by the boy's childish but substantially correct replies, I had no hesitation in admitting him to communion, and advised him to come back often to 'eat' his child Jesus at the holy table."

When we remember that the human victim on Vao was formerly (and still is on the adjacent mainland) sacrificed (i.e. consecrated) on a dolmen, which the Roman Catholics rightly refer to as an "altar," that this dolmen was furnished with an ancestor-image, and that Père Godefroy had shortly before (on August 15th, 1931) installed a statue of Notre Dame de Lourdes in his little church,² we may imagine what visions of cannibal feasts were called up in the boy's mind. How conscious the missionaries are of the very real connexion I cannot say. Psychologically conceived, the cannibal overcomes and subsequently consumes or re-absorbs the Old Adam in terms of human victims, and as a result is re-born, together with all the members of his clan who partake with him of the flesh. The Christian becomes spiritually renewed through precisely the same sequence of events when, in the Mass, he consumes the body of the sacrificed Christ. Those who, belonging to the present scientific age,

¹ Godefroy, 3, pp. 196-7.

² Renzdy, p. 18a.

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782 are no longer able to gain salvation either through eating their fellow-men or through the Mass, have the more difficult task of withdrawing all such 'projections' by overcoming the Old Adam within themselves and of becoming re-born through a re-absorption of its contents which, in dreams, is still symbolised by eating, such eating being repugnant or not according as they reject or accept the lesson which the dream teaches.

To most adults (though not usually to children) it is repugnant, and it is therefore of interest to find that while the cannibals of the Small Islands attach great spiritual value to the eating of human flesh, the actual taste of it is not always so relished as is commonly supposed. Thus, though the Big Nambas are reported as being great lovers of human flesh,¹ there is nothing in Malekula resembling the degraded practice in Oba of fattening women especially for eating.² Nor is there any evidence for the materialistic conception that cannibalism originated from the desire on the part of a largely vegetarian people to supply a deficiency in meat. On the contrary, human flesh is on occasion, for ritual reasons, purposely befouled before eating. Such is the case in Tanna, where, at the first eating, boys have on this account to be forced unwillingly to partake.³ From all over the islands come reports that, quite apart from any white influence, the natives have a feeling that the eating of human flesh is "not quite normal."⁴ Thus, Codrington reports from Oba that "the boys were afraid, but were made to do it. It is the feeling there that to eat human flesh is a dreadful thing, a man-eater is one afraid of nothing." This reminds us of Asaor's adoption of the name of the Guardian Ghost, the definition of whose fearsome attributes is that she is "afraid of nothing."⁵ Codrington continues that in Oba "on this ground men will buy flesh when some one has been killed, that they may get the name of valiant men by eating it. A certain man in Lepers-Island [Oba] mourned many days for his son, and would not eat till he bought a piece of human flesh for himself and his remaining boy; it was a horrid thing to do, appropriate to his gloomy grief."⁶ In other parts of the group, cannibalism has become degraded into a pure lust for human flesh, and in most places it includes notions of revenge. Even in those cases, however, in which contempt plays a large part, as in South-West Malekula, where there exists a special cannibal society called *Nimbr'ni*, the eating of a human being was never treated as a purely secular affair.⁷

While cannibalism is thus seen to constellate a great number of emotions in other islands I heard little of such secondary characteristics on Vao, where the act is still primarily regarded as a sacrifice. But the motive of boasting and the acquisition of a reputation for ruthless valiance

¹ Harrison, 2, p. 404, and 1, p. 14.

² Speiser, 3, p. 241.

³ See p. 606.

⁴ Codrington, 3, p. 344.

⁵ See Deacon, 3, p. 496.

⁶ Ibid. p. 240.

⁷ See Deacon, 4, p. 230.

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certainly exists there as elsewhere. Thus, my own informant Pelur is credited with having killed thirty-two men, all of whom have been eaten, but it is to be noted that the emphasis is here on the killing (i.e. the sacrifice) rather than on the eating. This number is, moreover, unusual on Vao, though beaten by the report of one East Malekulan chief having killed and eaten one hundred and twenty.¹ Both cases are almost certainly due to the introduction of the musket and the consequent orgy of killing described on pp. 602 ff., which, wherever it takes place, by making killing too easy, inevitably detracts from its sacrificial nature and leads to those excesses of which, though he himself was responsible for the introduction of this lethal weapon, the white man usually hears of and condemns.

¹ Reported by Paton (see Speiser, 3, p. 242).

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endless series of minor rites are performed, each involving the sacrifice of numerous tusked boars and an enormous expenditure of food for feasts. Each village performs its own rite in its own time, and the major rites attract guests from all other villages on the island, as well as from other islands and from the Malekulan mainland. There are numerous dance-cycles, frequently lasting all night, and finally, before the supreme sacrifice, for five days and nights on end. Each dance-cycle has its own songs, many of which commemorate the deeds of ancestors, and its peculiar gong-rhythms beaten on an orchestra of upright slit-gongs. Some of the songs are of surpassing beauty, and the gong-rhythms are so complicated that no European has yet been known to master them. Interspersed between the dance-cycles performed at stated intervals throughout the rite are a series of formal square dances and dramatic performances called *na-leng*,¹ many of which have become secularized, but some of which remain traditional and form a running commentary on the mythological background of the rite. This, as I hope to show in a forthcoming work, is none other than a dramatization of the Malekulan version of the journey of the dead, briefly described by me in a recent article (1934), which itself forms part of the mythology of megalithic peoples as far apart as the Nagas in Assam, the inhabitants of the Tamil country of Southern India, peoples of the Near East, of the Mediterranean littoral, and, in our own islands, of ancient Scotland, and in Scandinavia.

The bearers of this megalithic civilization were a maritime and river-loving people or peoples, the details of whose adventurous migrations yet remain to be worked out in detail—there have been at least two separate migrations of them into Malekula—but there can be little doubt that from Scandinavia to Malekula and beyond they have a common origin. One of the greatest interests to us therefore in Malekula is the fact that it is not impossible that, in the ritual of the *Maki* and in the beliefs associated with it, we may see a variant of one aspect at least of what some of our own forefathers, the megalith builders of Britain, did and thought. This rite is also one of fertility and of re-birth, each participant marking his assumption of new life by taking a new name, usually that of a maternal ancestor. The sacrifice of tusked boars is known on Atchin, both by precept and through historical tradition, to be a substitute for former human sacrifice, and those who make the highest sacrifice take oaths to keep the peace for varying periods, extending to three years, or, in the case of old men, a lifetime. Though cannibalism still exists, it is contrary to present *Maki* practice, but its close association with more ancient religious forms is still evident in that when an enemy is wounded, a dolmen, similar to that erected in the older *Maki* use, is hastily constructed in the bush, and the body is placed upon it and there ritually sacrificed, the victor thereupon taking a new name as in the *Maki* proper.

Though the wooden images of ancestors and hawks, and the roofs erected over the stone monuments rot, the stone themselves are never taken down, and remain as a memorial to those who sacrificed at them, whose stones they are henceforth said to be. I have shown elsewhere (1928) that monolith and wooden image combined represent an earlier form in which there was no

¹ See Mr. Harrison's reference to similar performances among the Big Nambas, p. 332.